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DRAFT REPORT

Addendum

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PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

Proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001

Programme 21. Protection and assistance to refugees

1. At its 32nd meeting, on 24 June 1996, the Committee considered programme 21, Protection and assistance to refugees, of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001.

Discussion

2. A number of delegations expressed their general support for the programme, the general thrust of the proposed medium-term plan and the strong emphasis on improving efficiency, transparency and accountability.

3. Some delegations were of the view that the objective of exploring the development of further measures in order to ensure international protection to all who needed it should be further elaborated.

4. Some delegations expressed the view that the statement in paragraph 21.5 (a) concerning forced population movements should be carefully formulated to ensure that it was consistent with the statements in the legislative mandate.

5. Some delegations considered that the main challenge in providing assistance was development. Broader recovery and development efforts other than quick-impact projects deserved more emphasis. In addition, cooperation of regional agencies and other United Nations agencies should be sought.

Conclusions and recommendations

6. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of programme 21 of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001, with the following modifications:

(a) Replace paragraph 21.12 with the following:

"21.12 The final objective of this subprogramme is to help achieve permanent solutions to the problems of refugees. In that regard, UNHCR will promote the elaboration of more comprehensive regional approaches to resolve refugee situations and other forms of involuntary displacement, as appropriate. Of the classical durable solutions to refugee problems, namely, local settlement/integration, resettlement or voluntary repatriation, the preferred solution for UNHCR will be voluntary repatriation under conditions of safety and dignity, while attempts to formulate and implement appropriate regional solutions should be made";

(b) Replace paragraph 21.19 with the following:

"21.19 The final objective of this subprogramme will be that the link between the broader development efforts and the practicability of proposed solutions, such as reintegration assistance in support of voluntary repatriation, should be established and adequately taken into account. In that regard, UNHCR, when elaborating solutions, will work closely with development entities and international financial institutions".